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**REPORT TO: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES  
COMMITTEE ON 31 OCTOBER 2017**

**SUBJECT: SPEYSIDE COMMUNITY CAR SHARE SCHEME**

**BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR (ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,  
PLANNING & INFRASTRUCTURE)**

**1. REASON FOR REPORT**

- 1.1 To inform the Committee of proposals to alter the funding arrangements for Speyside Community Car Share Scheme
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III (F) (18) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to public transport.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

**2.1 It is recommended that the Committee approve:**

- (i) continued informal support of Speyside Community Car Share Scheme by transportation officers; and
- (ii) the proposed funding arrangements set out in para 3.9.

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Speyside Community Car Share Scheme is a community organisation which provides transport to elderly and infirm residents of Speyside who do not otherwise have access to transport. Their principal aspiration is to promote the welfare and relieve the needs of those resident in the Speyside community who are socially isolated by reasons of age, infirmity or disability through the provision of a volunteer-based transport service.
- 3.2 These volunteers use their own cars to transport people, primarily to healthcare appointments, but also for shopping and social journeys. These include journeys outwith Moray to medical facilities in Inverness and Aberdeen. Volunteer drivers receive mileage expenses in line with the journeys they undertake. Users are charged 30p per mile for healthcare related journeys and 40p per mile for social journeys.
- 3.3 The scheme is held in high regard by its users, and is regarded by them as a lifeline service. There are over 400 members, and in 2016/17 989 journeys were made.

- 3.4 Accounts have been supplied by the trustees of the charity, indicating that the scheme costs £23,000 per year to operate. This includes the employment of a salaried co-ordinator. The scheme receives approximately £5,000 in income from users. Other income sources are donations and grants.
- 3.5 Speyside Car Share Scheme has received funding since 2001. Initially this funding was the Rural Community Transport Initiative and was essentially an onward distribution of specific funding through the Scottish Office. At the time it was stated that there were no financial implications for the Council as the grant award process required organisations “to submit a bid for funds for up to 3 financial years, with the expectation that thereafter the scheme would be self-financing” (Para 4.1, Item 13, Economic Development and Planning Committee 29 September 1998 refers). Currently the Council provides £7,000 per annum from the transportation budget. Following the eradication of ring fenced funds in 2008 the scheme continued to be funded by the Council, although specific reports confirming the basis for these payments have not yet been found.
- 3.6 This is the only community organisation that receives direct funding from the Council for the provision of transport services. Whilst there is no question that the scheme provides a valuable community service, there are a number of other community transport organisations across Moray which do not receive funding.
- 3.7 Officers can (and do) provide informal support to this, and other, community transport organisations, working in partnership with Moray Forum Transport Steering Group. This support includes advice on funding sources, support and access to training, support with regulatory procedures, and information on new resources and technologies.
- 3.8 It is proposed that the funding for Speyside Car Share Scheme is gradually reduced, recognising the disparity with other community transport organisations, and also recognising the Council’s financial position. As the scheme is reliant on the funding at this time, it is suggested that this is phased to enable the scheme to build other funding sources to replace this.
- 3.9 As such, it is proposed that the future funding profile is agreed as:

2018/19 - £5,000  
2019/20 - £2,500  
2020/21 – no funding

#### **4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

##### **(a) Moray 2026: A Plan for the Future and Moray Corporate Plan 2015 - 2017**

This report relates to the Moray 2026 priority of a growing, diverse and sustainable economy, and the Corporate Plan values of fairness and sustainability – aiming to provide services equitably across the area, and spending money in a way which can be maintained over time.

**(b) Policy and Legal**

This report aims to make the council's policy approach to community transport more consistent.

**(c) Financial implications**

There are modest savings to be made to revenue budget expenditure if the recommendations are accepted. Reducing the funding would introduce parity with other community transport schemes.

**(d) Risk Implications**

The Speyside Community Car Share Scheme is a voluntary organisation with dedicated individuals who are likely to feel that a reduction in funding has an impact on the sustainability of the organisation.

**(e) Staffing Implications**

There are no staffing implications.

**(f) Property**

There are no property implications

**(g) Equalities**

The Speyside Community Car Share Scheme provides a service to elderly and disabled people in a rural area that is, like various other areas within Moray, characterised by a high degree of deprivation in relation to access to services. During 2015/16 the scheme provided 463 journeys for medical reasons and has noted an increased demand in requests for transport to ARI. Some residents in Speyside are eligible to recover some transport costs from the NHS which assists in funding these journeys. Part of the proposed support arrangements would include exploring funding opportunities with other bodies such as the NHS. It is recognised that a complete withdrawal of financial support from the Moray Council at this moment would mean that the scheme would fold. Having considered this impact, it is proposed that the Moray Council will support the scheme in becoming financially independent whilst withdrawing the funding gradually in order to give the scheme time to seek alternative funding.

**(h) Consultations**

The Legal Services Manager (Property & Contracts), Committee Services Officer (L Rowan), Principal Accountant (Environmental Services), and Equalities Officer have all been consulted and their comments incorporated into this report.

**5. CONCLUSION**

**5.1 The Speyside Community Car Share Scheme provides a valuable community service, however, recognising the disparity with other community transport organisations and the Council's financial position, a reduction in funding is recommended.**

**5.2 It should be highlighted that support from council officers and the Moray Forum Transport Steering Group will still be given to enable the scheme to continue successfully.**

Author of Report: Nicola Moss, Transportation Manager

Background Papers:

Ref: